

# TORRANCE PRESS

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## New Law Makes it Possible to Go Bargain-Hunting for Judge

Beginning next month, if you're in a jam with the law you can start shopping for a "soft" judge.

If you can find one.

As of Sept. 18 a new State law goes into effect which permits a defendant in a criminal case to ask for a change in venue if he doesn't believe he'll get a square shake from the judge into whose courtroom he is summoned originally.

All he has to do is sign an affidavit of prejudice, and zoom, his case is transferred to another judge.

Since judges are human, no two of them may think quite alike on a case, and the new law makes it possible to do limited shopping for justice.

But a change of venue can be obtained only once.

For example, a motorist who is cited on a speeding charge may feel that the judge before whom he is summoned may be too tough on speeders. Under the new law he can get his case transferred to another judge.

A defendant in this area will be limited to have his case

heard by one of the three judges assigned to the South Bay Municipal Court which has a Torrance branch presided over by Judge Otto B. Willett.

Ordinarily a person arrested in Torrance will appear before Judge Willett. But if the defendant has qualms about appearing before him, his case may be transferred to either of the two other judges, John A. Shidler or Donald Armstrong at South Bay. But he has no choice between the latter two and a case can only be transferred once.

Court attaches who have observed the three judges in action, claim that in this district there is actually very little difference in the sentences passed out by the trio, and there will be few advantages in getting a case transferred.

They concede though, that one judge may have a little more tolerance for a particular offense than another.

As an example, it's an open secret that Judge Armstrong is tough on motorists arrested for driving after their operator's license has been suspended.

As he sees it, this type of defendant is openly contemptuous of the law, and almost invariably he is headed for a sojourn in the county clink.

On the other hand, Judge Willett takes a dim view of drivers arrested for excessive speed, something over 80 m.p.h. and has no compunction about sending them to the hoosegow for extensive stays.

He is equally rough on men convicted of wife beating or other strong-arm methods on women.

To all appearances, Judge Shidler's pet peeves are motorcyclists and sports car drivers who usually receive a lecture on the hazards of their transportation. The jurist usually winds up citing them insurance statistics on the danger of their vehicles.

But in most respects the three judges mete out just about the same punishment, and the court attaches don't believe that shopping around for another judge will help much.

But they keep their eyes on Sept. 18 to see what will happen.

## Girl Foils Kidnaper in Bizarre Stabbing

### Chopstick Used in Escape

A pretty young woman freed herself from the clutches of a kidnaper when she stabbed him with a Japanese chopstick early yesterday.

Martha Mary Larsen, 20, of 4119 W. 169th St., Lawndale, said she was forced to drive her abductor around for nearly an hour before she made her escape in the Hollywood Riviera area.

She said that the suspect, in his early twenties, forced himself into her car at knife-point while she was stopped for a traffic signal at Pier and Grant Aves. Redondo Beach, shortly before midnight.

"You just better keep on driving and don't try anything smart," he growled at her.

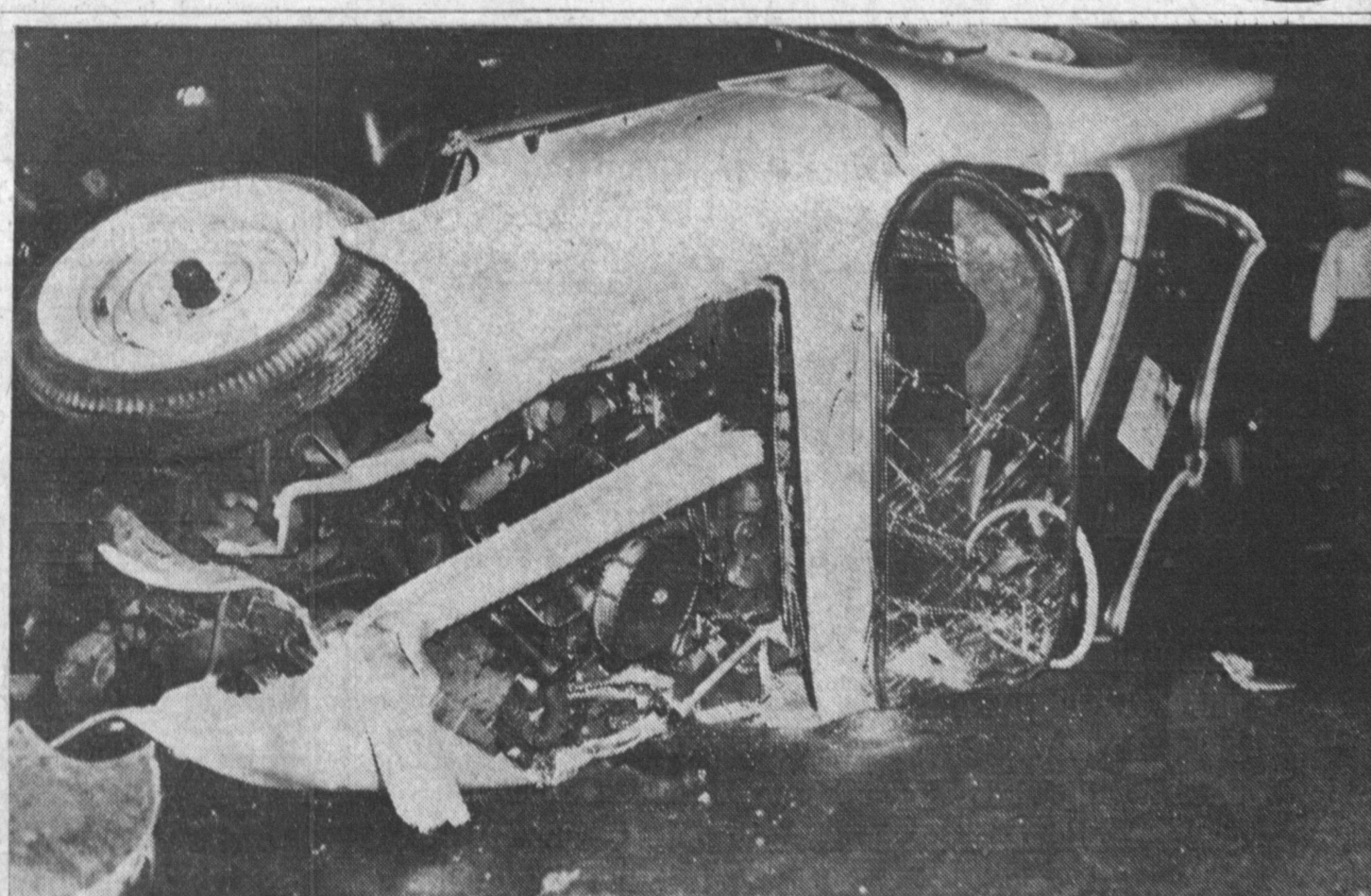
The man forced her to drive around Torrance and Gardena for nearly an hour and kept giving her directions as if he was quite familiar with the area. He also instructed her to avoid Torrance Blvd.

Miss Larsen, a punch press operator at Harvey Aluminum Co., said that finally as she shifted into second gear while negotiating a hill on Via Los Altos, the man grabbed the keys from the ignition and pushed them into his pocket.

He grabbed her as the car slowed down, and Miss Larsen remembered she had the chopstick between the front seats of her car. She grabbed it and drove it into his side, drawing blood.

When the kidnaper stiffened and gasped, she dashed out of the car and pounded on the door of the home of Mrs. Ruth Shade, 133 Via Los Altos where she called police.

The kidnaper ran off toward Calle Mayor and disappeared.



END OF LINE—Edward A. McCullars, 26, of Inglewood, driver of this car, was killed in a two-car crash on Pacific Coast Highway near Ocean Ave., Sunday night. Four other persons, occupants of the other auto, were injured.

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## City Tax Rate Up

Torrance's tax rate will be upped by 7 1/2 cents per \$100 assessed valuation after the City Council grudgingly set the levy at \$1.288 Tuesday night.

The hike above the 1958-59 rate of \$1.214 was based on a budget of approximately \$4,433,000, and a secured assessed valuation of \$180,843,630.

Ordering of portable radar apparatus to cut down on highway speed here, was approved by a 4 to 3 vote.

Police Lt. Don Nash said he does not expect the electronic equipment to be pressed into use for at least two months and that it will be used mainly for public relations and to assist in setting of "realistic" speed limits on city streets.

Councilmen approved the job description for a city nurse over the opposition of three of their members to check on sick employees and also give first aid.

Charles Hogan, a spokesman for the city employees union, said later that his organization will watch carefully whether the nurse's job will be used for "stool-pigeon" purposes.

A suggestion by Councilman George Bradford that the municipal airport be placed under the direction of the public works department was tabled for three weeks.

### Chase Driver

Two Huntington Park men chased the driver of another car which had assertedly bumped fenders with them and struck a parked vehicle in front of 4130 W. 174th St.

Paul Hissner and George A. West pursued the other car to 176th St. and Kornblum Ave., where they made a citizen's arrest of Earl Homer Quest, 29, of 18229 Towne Ave., police reported.

## Youth Arrested in Stolen Car

A youth and his 16-year-old friend were arrested by deputy sheriffs less than an hour after they allegedly stole a parked car here early Sunday.

Booked on suspicion of grand theft auto charges was George Edward Riddle, 20, of 2501 W. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena, who was stopped for speeding at Carson St. and Normandie Ave.

When deputies stopped Riddle, they observed that the car had been hot-wired.

## Motorist Killed, Four Hurt in Auto Crash

The driver of a sports car was killed and four persons in another car injured in a spectacular crash on Pacific Coast Highway near Ocean Ave. Sunday night.

Edward A. McCullars, 26, of 401 S. Freeman Ave., Inglewood, was pronounced dead on arrival at Harbor General Hospital after his car flipped in the air in the collision. The driver reportedly was ejected from his convertible and crushed underneath it.

Carroll Bonto, 52, of 985 Calle Miramar, driver of the other car, and three of his passengers were also taken to Harbor General Hospital but released to their own physicians, police reported.

McCullars' death was the seventh traffic fatality of the year here.

Passengers in Bonto's machine included his wife, Hildegard, 39, Robert Van Rensselaer, 58, of Santa Monica, and his wife, Edna, 49.

Two motorcycle riders were taken to Harbor General Hospital with injuries received in a crash with a car at Western Ave. near 190th St., Saturday night.

Charles M. Hall, of 6005 Jacques St., and James Sankey, of 22704 Earl St., were reported injured, while Doris D. Preston, 20, of 21528 Moneta Ave., driver of the car, escaped injuries, police said.

Terry Wilkin, 6, of 2825 W. 171st St., received a possible broken leg Monday afternoon, when his bicycle collided with an auto on Ainsworth Ave. near 170th St., police said. He was taken to Jones Medical Clinic.

The driver of the car was identified by officers as Edward Clinton Hylands, 43, of 3772 W. 174th St.

## OK Funds for Bridges in Torrance

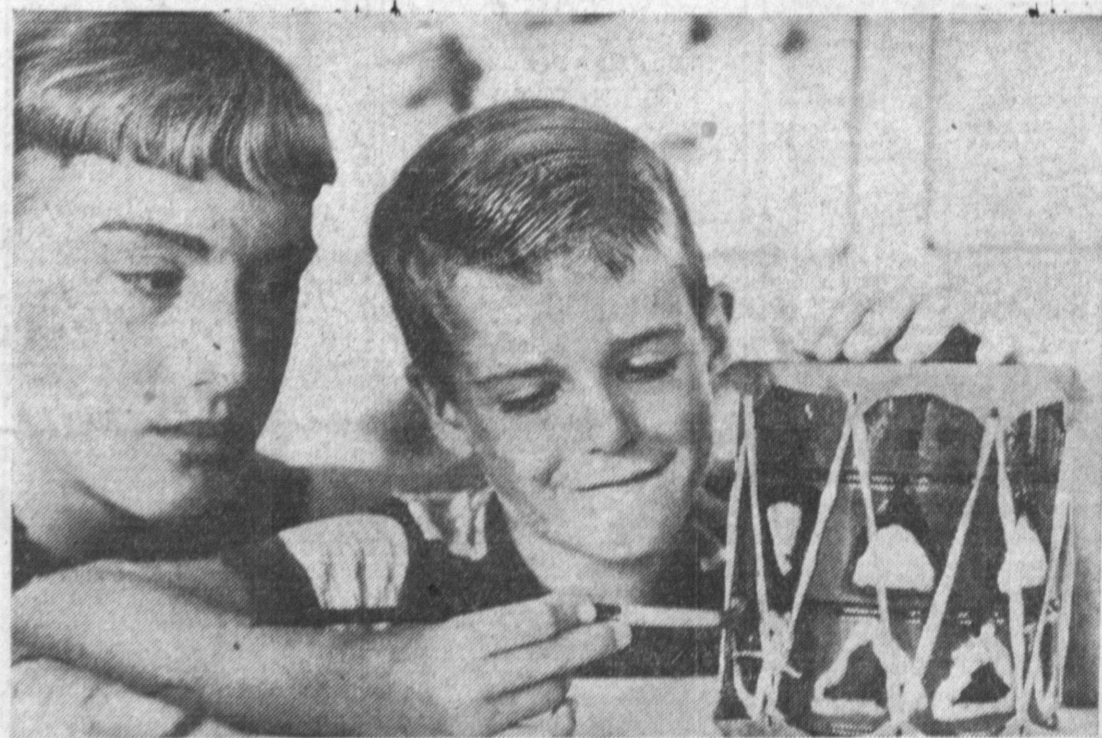
Allocation of \$48,000 in gas tax funds to Torrance for the improvement of four bridges across Dominguez channel was announced this week by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn.

Money was granted to Torrance out of the aid to cities fund on the basis that the improvements to be made will be of general benefit to the motoring public.

Hahn pointed out that a contract recently was awarded for the permanent widening and improvement of the Dominguez flood control channel from Gramercy place to Redondo Beach Blvd. and that this project will involve building new bridges across the channel at Crenshaw Blvd., Redondo Beach Blvd., Cherry Ave., and Arlington Ave.

Work has already started on the new bridge at Crenshaw Blvd. and traffic is now being detoured.

Funds granted to Torrance will be used in improving the bridges so that they will carry maximum traffic and to reduce congestion on the streets affected.



ON EXHIBIT—Craig Reynolds, 6 1/2, gets an assist from playground leader Kathie Curtis, 12, as he puts finishing touches on tom-tom. Numerous articles made during the summer arts and crafts program will be on exhibit at an open house to be held today and tomorrow in the Civic Auditorium starting at 7 p.m.

## Art, Craft Program to Be Curtailed

A scaled-down arts and crafts program will be conducted at the Sea-Aire Park recreation building after the facilities at the old city hall were taken over by the new owner this morning.

Recreation officials were instructed Monday to vacate the craft center which will be used by the Home Savings and Loan Association which purchased the municipal building at 1511 Cravens Ave., for \$100,000.

The space occupied by the crafts program will be used as a temporary office by the financial institution which will remodel the structure to suit its needs.

The Recreation Department administrative office will remain at the old city hall rent-free under terms of the sale.

In the meantime the Chamber of Commerce, which now also occupies the building, is expected to squeeze its pennies and pay \$150 per month rent for its offices. Until now, the Chamber has been provided with rent-free quarters by the city.

## Youth Jailed in Theft From Two Family Members

A youth charged with stealing appliances from his mother and grandmother, was given a 90 day jail sentence Monday after he pleaded guilty before Municipal Judge Otto B. Willett.

John Charles Gilliam, 18, was charged with stealing an electric mixer from the home of his grandmother, Mrs. Emily F. Turner, of 2024 Martina Ave., with whom he resided, and a portable sewing machine from his mother, Mrs. Virginia S. Evans, of 1005 Maple Ave.

The youth was arrested after he allegedly pawned the stolen articles.

## City Dads Hit Isen on Bid to Krushchev

At least three councilmen sharply attacked Mayor Albert Isen's still unanswered invitation to Nikita Krushchev to visit Torrance while on his American tour next month.

"I don't find any statement in the city charter which gives the mayor the right to enter the international field. I'm not interested in Mr. Krushchev coming here," snapped Councilman Willys Blount.

Isen defended his right to extend a personal invitation to the Soviet premier to come to Torrance.

Defends Action "I hate Communism, and I have no use for Communists and Krushchev," he retorted. "President Eisenhower had already invited him, and Torrance is still

part of the United States. If the President thinks it's in the best interests of the United States to invite him, we should support him."

Councilman Robert Jahn said that the mayor's invitation may have strained this city's relations with Konya, Turkey, and his motion to disassociate the City Council from the mayor's invitation was passed unanimously.

"I don't believe in inviting a man who represents a cancerous growth . . . some may rub off on the little children and become a malignancy," declared Councilman George Bradford.

Reads Letters Blount, who read two letters from residents criticizing the Krushchev invitation, said he "de-

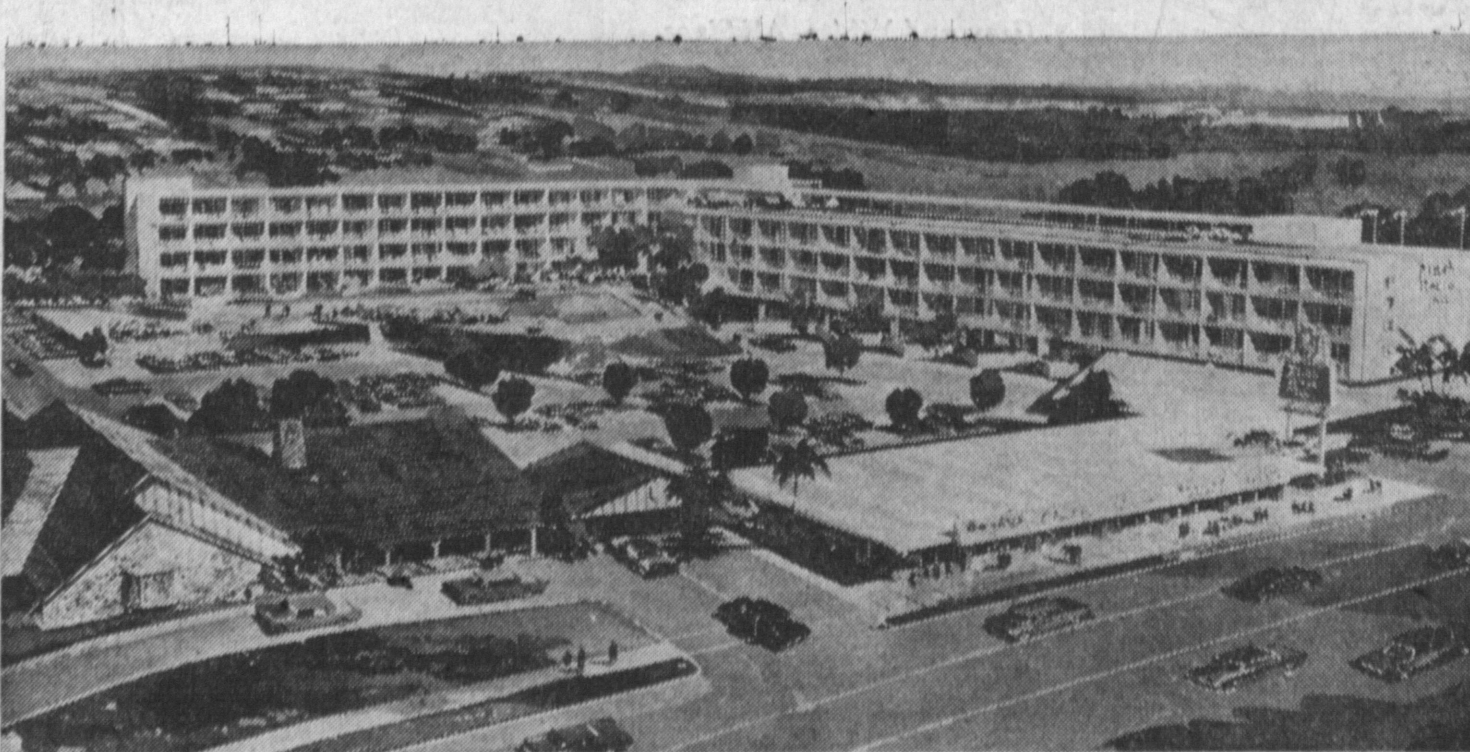
## Ruptured Hose Injures Fireman at House Blaze

A fireman suffered minor injuries Sunday when a high pressure line ruptured while battling a house fire.

Fireman Howard Schneider required no treatment, however, after he was struck on the head by the hose.

He and other firemen were extinguishing a blaze at the home of Wendell Vaughn, which caused approximately \$150 damage.

Fire Marshal Robert Lucas said the fire was started by a 100 watt light bulb in a lamp which fell to the floor. The heat from the bulb burned a hole through the rug and floor.



PLUSH FUTURE—This is an architect's conception of the future Plush Horse Inn which will include a 210-room resort motor hotel and shops on an eight-acre parcel adjacent to the present Plush Horse Restaurant which has been sold by Harold Gelber to S. Jon Kreedman and Co., Beverly Hills investment firm. Construction on the first unit of 108 rooms for the hostelry on Pacific Coast Highway is expected to begin within a week. The Plush Horse Inn will be designed to attract convention groups. Purchase of the present facilities and the first addition represents an investment of \$3,500,000.

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## Board Approves Use of Educational Television in Schools Next Year

Torrance youngsters will get an additional dose of television next year, but the programs will not be shot 'em ups or Mickey Mouse Club entertainment.

Following considerable coolness to educational television the Board of Education Tuesday approved purchase of six 24-inch sets.

North, South, and Torrance High Schools each will have one set, while the other three will be used in elementary schools. Officials have not yet decided which elementary schools will try out the new teaching medium.

"We have received mixed reports from other districts which have tried educational TV," Assistant Superintendent Albert Posner said. "We would like to evaluate the program to see whether it is suited to Torrance schools."

The local classes will view programs broadcast over channel 13 by the Los Angeles County and Los Angeles City Audio Visual Divisions. The programs appear for a half-hour each day. Other specialized programs may appear at other times.

Subjects scheduled to appear on TV this fall include elementary Spanish, language arts, science, health, social studies, and math.

Some of the questions to which Torrance officials will seek answers include:

1. How well do children learn from watching educational TV? Do the programs help all students or only a small group?

2. How well does educational TV tie in with the rest of the school program?

3. Is one TV set enough for a classroom? Can all the children see one set? Is the set easily

portable? How big a group can profit from watching TV?

4. Since programs come on at only one time, what effect will this have on the rest of the school day?

5. How expensive are the sets to maintain and repair? Is the program worth the cost? Could some other audio-visual program (films, tapes, etc.) do the job as well?

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